

STATEMENT OF
LARRY A. DEVER
SHERIFF
COCHISE COUNTY, ARIZONA

BEFORE THE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
PERMANENT SELECT COMMITTEE ON
INTELLIGENCE

REGARDING
SECURING THE SOUTHERN BORDER

AUGUST 17, 2006

SIERRA VISTA, ARIZONA

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss with you today security matters of grave national concern associated with our southern border. And thank you for coming to the border to hold this hearing. Some say that you come too late. Considering this, I am reminded of the story of the master of a house who desired that a certain tree dress his garden. The chief gardener, hearing of this, went to the master and said, "But master that tree takes a hundred years to mature." Replied the master, "Then you must plant it now!"

Border security concerns are certainly not new. I have with me a copy of a magazine published by the Arizona Sheriffs' Association. It highlights the Border Patrol. I quote from Tucson Sector Chief Jerald Jondall:

"Within the last year, we've been mandated by Congress to gain control of the border. And we're going to do that along the southern border, whether it's narcotics, illegal aliens, terrorists, criminals, whatever."

The article was published Autumn, 1987.

While we sit here awash in methamphetamine and other drugs produced and smuggled across the Mexican border, battle increasingly violent smuggling cartels and are overrun by thousands of illegal aliens passing through and trashing our county, a couple of things jump out at you from this statement. One, 20 years later we have a growing, not a diminishing problem, and secondly, the idea that terrorists could enter this country through the southern border is not a post 9-11 worry. Sadly, the answer to the question of "Who is crossing our border?" continues to be, "Anyone who really wants to."

Oh, and by the way, the mentioned mandate from Congress to secure the border came one year following the 1986 amnesty program.

So, what role does the intelligence community play on the road to mitigation and abatement along the border? Through experience, we know some things that work well and some that do not.

The April 2005 Minuteman project is one of example of what will work. A great deal of anxiety on the part of local citizens, law enforcement, media and just about everyone else preceded the launch of this project.

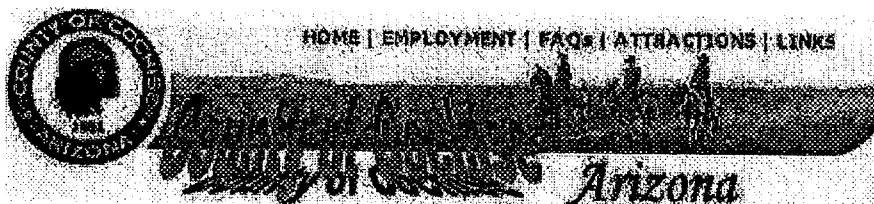
A disaster was forecast by most that was met with an equal or superior determination to ensure the predicted train wreck would not occur. We met extensively with all interested parties and worked out a template for activity that would be acceptable, if adhered to, by all. There was a lot of skepticism throughout most of the law enforcement community and many others, but all agreed to follow the plan. It worked, primarily due to two elements. The Minutemen did an excellent job of policing themselves to assure that no one strayed out of bounds. Quietly, behind the scenes, we assembled every affected law enforcement agency, to include our Mexican counterparts at an information center. With phone banks and computer terminals immediately available to everyone at the same time, in the same place, all misinformation, and there was a ton of it, was dispelled in short order averting hundreds of potential problems. Everyone that needed to know anything got all the right information when they needed it. Every successful intelligence operation will constantly ask itself these two questions: "Who needs to know this, and How soon do they need to know it?"

In short, the model is to co-locate all interested parties in a spirit of trust and cooperation, establishing common objectives and be as close as possible to the problem. Too many intelligence and information efforts in the past have been so far removed from the source and from potential users as to ultimately be rendered totally ineffective.

Out of this effort was born an ongoing process that includes a monthly meeting of law enforcement agencies from Cochise County and the Mexican State of Sonora to discuss concerns and plan mutually beneficial operational activities as well as share intelligence. Full participation by all federal agencies, to include Ft. Huachuca, and some financial support would greatly enhance this effort.

Finally, it has been proven imperative that any federal initiative or strategy must include local involvement and input. Those who know the landscape, the players and the pitfalls can best assess the means to attaining desired results. To do otherwise condemns us all to the mire of the rule of "unintended consequences" which has dominated the excuse pattern for past failures.

I stand prepared to answer any questions you may have. Thank you.

**BORDER ALLIANCE GROUP****Sheriff Main page****Elected Official**

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Mission Statement

The primary mission of the Border Alliance Group is to deter the importation, distribution and production of unlawful narcotics and illegal substances through and within Cochise County, by conducting criminal investigation regarding narcotics and by disseminating narcotics related intelligence to other law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

Border Alliance Group

- [U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration \(DEA\)](#)
- [Cochise County Sheriff's Office](#)
- Tombstone Marshall
- [U.S. Customs](#)
- [U.S. Border Patrol](#)
- [Arizona Department of Public Safety](#)
- Benson Police Department
- [Bisbee Police Department](#)
- [Willcox Police Department](#)
- Douglas Police Department
- Arizona Attorney General's Office
- [Federal Bureau of Investigation](#)

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To report suspected Drug Dealers in your community, please call 1-800-HELP BAG (1-800-435-7224) or send email to ccsobag@c2i2.com

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